Fire in Gas Pipeline in Mumbai

4140. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether underground fire in a gas pipeline of Mumbai Mahanagar brokeout on 13th March, 2003;

(b) whether an enquiry panel was set up;

(c) if so, what are its findings; and

(d) whether Government would formulate regulations/standards for laying and operating underground utilities in all the Metro cities to eschew such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR) : (a) No, Sir. However, a fire incident took place in Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL)'s gas pipeline at Andheri (E), Mumbai on 13-2-2003.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Committee investigated the accident and submitted its report to the Government on 21-3-2003. In the Report the Committee has reported that at about 6.10 P.M. there was sudden release of natural gas from the City Gas Pipeline of Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL) at Andheri East, Mumbai. At the time of the incident, a company was carrying out Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) for laying the Optical Fibre Cable Ducts. Their drilling rod hit and made a hole in the MGL's gas pipeline resulting in sudden release of gas. At that time a nearby vendor at the road junction lit an incense stick, which resulted into a spontaneous ignition of the escaping gas with high flames.

(d) The concerned companies follow stringent standards in laying and operating underground gas pipelines. Further steps have been taken by MGL as per recommendations of the Committee to avoid such incidents.

National Policy on Culture

4141. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 4359 given in the Rajya Sabha on 7th May, 2002 and state :

(a) whether Government have formulated a National Policy on Culture;